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IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 17 November 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter addressed to you by Mr. Ibrahim M. Bishari, Secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation concerning the British and United States statements accusing what they called "Libyan elements" of responsibility for the distressing incident of the crash of a United States Pan Am aircraft in 1988.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 67, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ali Ahmed ELHOUDEIRI
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter from the Secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation to the Secretary-General

You have undoubtedly followed the statements issued by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America accusing what they have called "Libyan elements" of responsibility for the distressing incident of the crash of the Pan Am aircraft in 1988. While we are astonished at the issuance of such statements and the strong language in which they are couched at a time when the world is witnessing an international détente that has led to renunciation of the use of such language and such random flinging of accusations, while we are astonished at that, we warn that such statements stem from a premeditated intention to accuse the Great Jamahiriya and undertake aggression against it. They unquestionably represent a great threat to peace and security, not only in the region but throughout the world.

We categorically deny that the Great Jamahiriya had any association with that incident or that the Libyan authorities have any knowledge of its perpetrators, and we reaffirm our condemnation of international terrorism in all its forms and extend the sympathy of the Libyan Arab people to the families of the victims of the incident and express its solidarity with them.

The Great Jamahiriya is a small, developing country. It is subjected to false accusations by the United States of America and the United Kingdom and, consequently, reserves its right to self-defence before the United Nations. At the same time, it affirms its belief in the peaceful settlement of disputes, as provided for in Article 33, paragraph 1, of the Charter, which provides that the parties to any dispute "shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement ...". The Great Jamahiriya is willing to resolve any difference between it and the United States of America and the United Kingdom by the means provided for in this Article.

The threatening language contained in the statements by the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom are incompatible with the spirit of the age in which we live, the age of détente and peaceful coexistence, and is no longer the language of communication and dialogue between civilized nations. The alternative is adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I hereby affirm that the competent authorities in the Great Jamahiriya adhere to the provisions of the Charter, particularly with regard to the peaceful settlement of disputes. We in the Great Jamahiriya are amazed that the Governments of States that are permanent members of the Security Council should direct such baseless accusations against a small State such as Libya.

Through you, Sir, we call upon the United States of America and the United Kingdom to resort to the language of dialogue and the logic of law, wisdom and reason, as provided for in the Charter. You will perceive, as you have in the past perceived, the extent of the Great Jamahiriya's readiness to cooperate in the conduct of any neutral and honest enquiry.

Raising issues as a means of propaganda and escalating them in this way without making any official contacts with the Libyan authorities and making insinuations and threats regarding the adoption of economic measures against the Great Jamahiriya before completion of the legal procedures, confirms our suspicion that these States seek only to intimidate us. It also recalls their interventions in the course of events that we have mentioned.

In conclusion, we affirm to you our condemnation of international terrorism in all its forms, to which Libya has fallen victim more than once. In 1983 a Libyan civilian aircraft was downed, and in 1986 the Great Jamahiriya was subjected to direct military aggression.

Ibrahim M. BISHARI
Secretary of the People's Committee
of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison
and International Cooperation